DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 134 064 HE 008 501

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TITLE	Report on the Council of Graduate Schools-Graduate Record Examinations Board 1976-77 Survey of Graduate Enrollment. Part I.
INSTITUTION	Association of Graduate Schools.; Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N.J.; Graduate Record Examinations Board, Princeton, N.J.
PUB DATE	Dec 76
NOTE	19p.; This report also issued as "CGS Communicator Special Report #8, December, 1976."
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Doctoral Degrees; *Enrollment; Enrollment Rate; *Enrollment Trends; *Graduate Students; *Graduate Study; *Higher Education; Masters Degrees; State Universities; *Surveys; Universities
IDENTIFIERS	*Council of Graduate Schools; Graduate Record Examinations Board

ABSTRACT

The Graduate Record Examinations Board and the Council of Graduate Schools conducts an annual survey of the enrollments of the Council's member institutions. The tables show (1) total graduate school enrollment by type of institution; (2) first-time enrollment by type of institution; (3) number of applications for graduate study; (4) number of graduate assistants (service required); (5) number of graduate fellows (nonservice required); (6) full-time and part-time total enrollment; (7) number of master's degrees; and (8) number of Ph.D. degrees. The survey shows a decrease in total graduate school enrollment and in total first-time graduate enrollment for the first time in the five years the survey has been conducted. The proportional decrease in total enrollment was greatest in public master's institutions; in first-time graduate enrollment, the proportional decrease was greatest in public Ph.D. institutions. Second, the number of applicants received for graduate study continues to show slight increase, with the proportional increase in Ph.D. institutions offsetting a decrease in public master's institutions. Third, the survey shows a continuing increase in the number of graduate assistantships awarded and a slight decrease in graduate fellowship. Finally, the number of master's degrees awarded continued to increase while the number of Ph.D.'s awarded continued to decrease. (JMF)

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ED134064

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IN AFFILIATION WITH
The Association of Graduate Schools
The Council of Graduate Schools
Educational Testing Service

Report on the Council of Graduate Schools-Graduate Record Examinations Board 1976-77 Survey of Graduate Enrollment*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Part I

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December 1, 1976

Introduction

As a result of the difficulty of obtaining accurate information on graduate enrollments, and particularly trends in enrollments, the GRE Board and the Council of Graduate Schools began five years ago to conduct an annual series of surveys of enrollment of the membership of the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States. The Council membership consists of some 344 graduate institutions who grant either the master's or doctorate as the highest degree. The members of the Council grant 99% of the earned doctorates and 85% of the master's degrees awarded.

This year's survey, like those of previous years, is divided into two sections, the first of which was distributed in the early fall of 1976 with a request that results be returned no later than November 1, 1976. This report provides the results of the first questionnaire mailing; it is anticipated that the results of the second questionnaire mailing will be available early in the spring of 1977.

Sample Description

Survey questionnaires were sent to each of the 344 graduate schools which are members of CGS. A total of 312 questionnaires were returned for a 91% response rate, an indication of the continued cooperation of member graduate schools. Since the primary purpose of the questionnaire was to develop comparative data between 1975 and 1976, responses to questions were included in the analysis only when data were supplied for both years. Thus, the effective response rate per question will vary from a high of 91% for the overall sample to a low of 74% for the question concerning applications. While this variability is probably to be expected, and is smaller than that found in previous years due to an increased effort to have -0- entered where appropriate, it does make comparisons across some questions of restricted value.

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*For reference purposes, this report is also issued as "CGS Communicator Special Report #8, December, 1976."

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Comparison of Usable Sample and Base Population

	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	% (sample of each population subgroup)
Total Institutions					
Public	230	67%	211	68%	92%
Private	114	33%	101	32%	89%
Total	344	100%	312	100%	91%
Master's Highest Degree					
Public	75	22%	65	21%	87%
Private	26	7%	24	7%	92%
Sub-total	101	29%	89	28%	88%
Ph.D. Highest Degree					
Public	155	45%	146	47%	94%
Private	88	26%	77	25%	88%
Sub-total	243	71%	223	72%	92%

Continued care should be exercised in attempting to compare results of this year's survey with published results of last year's survey insofar as 1975 data reported in the current survey may differ from 1975 data reported last year for several reasons. First, although the questionnaires and definitions remain unchanged from last year's survey, the actual number of institutions responding increased by 5.4% and the specific institutions responding in 1976 were not always identical to those responding in 1975. Second, some institutions noted that the data for 1975 which they were able to provide for this year's survey were different from, and better than, the 1975 data which they provided last year. Finally, there was an increase in CGS membership (10 institutions or 3%) and an increase both in the number of respondents (an increase of 16 or 5.4%) and in the response rate (91% this year as compared with 89% last year). Despite these limitations, the overall obtained sample (i.e., those submitting usable questionnaires on time) is representative of the total CGS population, although weighted slightly toward Public Ph.D. institutions.

Comparisons of number and percentages of several ways of describing the available population and sample are shown above; it should be noted that "Master's Highest Degree" refers, throughout this report, only to those institutions for which the master's degree is, in fact, the highest degree awarded. Data for these institutions do not reflect master's degrees offered by institutions which also offer the doctorate.

The percentages shown in the table in page 2--and in Tables 1 through 8 at the end of this report--show response rate based on the number of institutions in CGS; e.g., the 312 institutions providing responses to this survey represent

91% of the CGS institutions and a 91% response rate is noted. Since the sample of institutions with usable data becomes less complete as the complexity of the questions or the difficulty of obtaining the data increases, the number of institutions providing usable data and the response rate that number represents are given for each question in the data presentation.

In addition, several users of this report have expressed an interest in the proportion of total CGS graduate school enrollment which the responding institutions represent and these figures, while approximate, are provided in a footnote to each table. Based upon the results of this year's survey, combined with additional data from the Graduate Programs and Admissions Manual, one may estimate the 1975 total graduate school enrollment for CGS members at approximately 845,000. Using this estimate, it is then possible to report that the 312 institutions which responded to this year's survey represent a 91% response rate (based on percentage of CGS institutions) and also accounted for approximately 91% of the 1975 total graduate enrollment at CGS institutions. This latter figure is created by taking the 1975 total enrollment reported this year (773,412) and dividing by 845,000. For subsequent questions, a similar computation has been carried out, removing from the 773,412 the reported total graduate enrollment of each institution which failed to provide a usable response to the question.

Results

The results of the survey are displayed in Tables 1 through 8. The tables present the number of respondents with usable data to each question (i.e., data for both years and for all parts of the question), the percentage that number represents of the total group or of the subgroup, e.g., public, the total number of students reported each year and the percentage change from 1975 to 1976. All data are presented by public, private, and total. In addition, Tables 1 through 4 also present data for institutions classified by means of the Educational Directory, Part 3, in terms of the highest degree awarded. These categories are: Public-Master's Highest; Private-Master's Highest; Public-Doctorate Highest; and Private-Doctorate Highest. This additional breakdown was not applied to later questions because it was not felt to be particularly important or because the differences were too small to affect the overall results.

Finally, all data were summarized by size of the responding graduate school, although these summaries do not appear in the tables presented. As with last year's report, this report bases size categories on quartile ranges by institutional type drawn from Part I of a prior survey. Thus, each size category--ranging from "1" for the smallest institutions to "4" for the largest institutions--will contain approximately 25% of all institutions of one type, facilitating meaningful comparisons of institutions by size. Size categories used in this report, by institutional type, are shown on page 4; results based on these size categories are noted in the following discussion, where appropriate.

Total Graduate School Enrollment for Size Categories, by Institutional Type

(Each size category contains approximately 25% of all institutions of that institutional type)

	(smallest) Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	(largest) Category 4
Public-Master's Highest Degree	0-750	751-1300	1301-2700	over 2700
Private-Master's Highest Degree	0-200	201-500	501-750	over 750
Public-Ph.D. Highest Degree	0-1200	1201-2300	2301-4100	over 4100
Private-Ph.D.	0-800	801-1400	1401-2300	over 2300

Discussion

Table 1 - For the first time since this survey was initiated five years ago, there is reported an overall decrease (2.3%) in total graduate school enrollment for the institutions reporting. The only increase (0.4%) occurred in the private Ph.D. institutions. Viewed in terms of size categories, there is a consistency of decrease in all categories except private Ph.D. where slight decreases in the three smallest size categories were offset by a moderate increase (3.6%) in category 4.

Table 2 - First-time enrollments also show a decline. There is an overall decline of 3.5%, resulting primarily from a 4.6% decrease in first-time enrollment in Ph.D. institutions. This in turn, reflects a decrease in all size categories at the public Ph.D. institutions (2.1% in category 2 to 8.9% in category 4) offset by an increase (4.7%) in the largest private Ph.D. institutions.

Table 3 - This is the third year that the question concerning the total number of applications received for graduate study has been included in the survey. It should be noted that the response rate for this question (74%) is the lowest of the questions. Although the total number of applications reported shows an increase of 1.3%, public master's degree institutions experienced a decrease (3.5%) which was offset by a total 1.9% increase in Ph.D. institutions. By size category, applications for public Ph.D. institutions increased in all size categories.

Table 4 - The number of graduate assistants (service required) increased in all categories except private master's degree institutions which report a small decrease (0.2%). The largest increase in both public and private institutions is at the Ph.D. level where an increase was reported in all size categories while the master's degree institutions reported a very slight (0.2%) total increase.

Table 5 - The number of graduate fellows (nonservice required), contrary to that reported for graduate assistants as noted in the previous table, showed a slight decrease (0.8%). The rate decrease at private institutions (1.5%) was greater than that at public institutions (0.3%) while the most significant decrease by size category was in the largest public master's institutions which experienced a 30.7% decrease.

Table 6 - This table indicates a breakdown of full- and part-time student enrollment for those institutions reporting. The report indicates an increased number of total enrollment reported, but a constant proportion of full-time (42%) and part-time (58%) students. This represents a departure from the trend since 1974 toward increase in proportion of part-time students. By size the largest private Ph.D. institutions and category 1 of the public Ph.D. institutions show the greater percentage increase in part-time students.

Table 7 - The number of master's degrees awarded increased (4.7%) between 1974-75 and 1975-76. The major portion of the increase was in public institutions (5.8%) where an increase was shown in all size categories, master's (7.0%) and Ph.D. (5.5%) level. Private Ph.D. institutions total degrees awarded decreased slightly (0.1%), the decrease appearing in all but the largest by size category.

Table 8 - The final table shows for the third consecutive year a decline, though slight (0.3%), in the total number of Ph.D.'s awarded; 1.8% increase in the private sector was offset by a 1.1% decrease in the public institutions. In turn, the increase in the private sector was contributed by the largest (category 4) institutions (8.5%), which offset a decrease in each of the other three size categories.

Conclusions

Once again, the first part of the CGS-GRE Board Survey of Graduate School Enrollment has met with excellent response in terms of the number of participating institutions and, accordingly, in terms of the value of the data which have been generated. Due to the continuing high institutional response rate and the representativeness of the sample, the results appear to be highly valid in ascertaining short-term trends in American graduate education.

Several results are of note. First, the survey shows for the first time in its five years of reporting a decrease in total graduate school enrollment and in total first-time graduate enrollment. The proportional decrease in total enrollment was greatest in public master's institutions; in first-time graduate enrollment, the proportional decrease was greatest in public Ph.D. institutions. Second, the number of applications received for graduate study continues to show slight increase, with the proportional increase in Ph.D. institutions offsetting a decrease in public master's institutions. Third, the survey shows a continuing increase in the number of graduate assistantships awarded and a slight decrease in graduate fellowships. Finally, the number of master's degrees awarded continued to increase while the number of Ph.D.'s awarded continued to decrease.

TABLE 1

Total Graduate School* Enrollment by Type of Institution

	Number	%**	1975	1976	% Change
Master's Highest					
Public	65	87%	136,309	129,965	4.7% decrease
Private	24	92%	19,751	19,610	0.7% decrease
Sub-Total	89	83%	156,060	149,575	4.2% decrease
Ph.D. Highest					
Public	146	94%	471,054	459,215	2.5% decrease
Private	77	88%	146,298	146,885	0.4% increase
Sub-Total	223	92%	617,352	606,100	1.8% decrease
Total Institutions					
Public	211	92%	607,363	589,180	3.0% decrease
Private	101	89%	166,049	166,495	0.3% increase
Total	312	91%***	773,412	755,675	2.3% decrease

*For purposes of this survey, institutions were asked to include all students considered as registered in the graduate school, including education, engineering, social work, medical and business programs leading to MA/MS or Ph.D , Ed.D., or other doctorates.

**Percentage figures are the number of institutions responding to this question as a percentage of the number available in the total group. For example, 65 Public Master's Highest Degree institutions responded out of a possible 75 such institutions in the CGS membership for an 87% response rate for that group of institutions.

***Based on the computations described under Sample Description on page 3, the 312 institutions responding to this question represent 91% of the CGS institutions and accounted for approximately 91% of the 1975 total student enrollment at CGS institutions.

TABLE 2

First-Time Graduate Enrollment by Type of Institution

	Number	%	1975	1976	% Change
Master's Highest					
Public	57	76%	29,516	29,379	0.5% decrease
Private	22	85%	4,827	4,834	0.1% increase
Sub-Total	79	78%	34,343	34,213	0.4% decrease
Ph.D. Highest					
Public	132	85%	112,796	105,333	6.6% decrease
Private	70	80%	39,523	39,969	1.1% increase
Sub-Total	202	83%	152,319	145,302	4.6% decrease
Total Institutions					
Public	189	81%	142,312	134,712	5.3% decrease
Private	92	82%	44,350	44,803	1.0% increase
Total	281	82%*	186,662	179,515	3.5% decrease

*Based on the computations described under Sample Description on page 3, the 281 institutions responding to this question represent 82% of the CGS institutions and accounted for approximately 81% of the 1975 total student enrollment at CGS institutions.

TABLE 3

Number of Applications for Graduate Study

	Number	%	1975	1976	% Change
Master's Highest					
Public	49	65%	61,917	59,737	3.5% decrease
Private	19	73%	11,798	11,876	0.7% increase
Sub-Total	68	67%	73,715	71,613	2.9% decrease
Ph.D. Highest					
Public	122	79%	358,290	365,763	2.1% increase
Private	65	74%	149,159	151,192	1.4% increase
Sub-Total	187	77%	507,449	516,955	1.9% increase
Total Institutions					
Public	171	74%	420,207	425,500	1.3% increase
Private	84	74%	160,957	163,068	1.3% increase
Total	255	74%*	581,164	588,568	1.3% increase

*Based on the computations described under Sample Description on page 3 the 255 institutions responding to this question represent 74% of the CGS institutions and accounted for approximately 74% of the 1975 total student enrollment at CGS institutions.

TABLE 4

Number of Graduate Assistants (Service Required)

	Number	%	1975	1976	% Change
Master's Highest					
Public	61	81%	5,807	5,819	0.2 increase
Private	23	88%	436	435	0.2% decrease
Sub-Total	84	83%	6,243	6,254	0.2% increase
Ph.D. Highest					
Public	128	83%	87,187	89,438	2.6% increase
Private	69	78%	19,527	20,174	3.3% increase
Sub-Total	197	81%	106,714	109,612	2.7% increase
Total Institutions					
Public	189	82%	92,994	95,257	2.4% increase
Private	92	81%	19,963	20,609	3.2% increase
Total	281	82%*	112,957	115,866	2.6% increase

*Based on the computations described under Sample Description on page 3, the 281 institutions responding to this question represent 82% of the CGS institutions and accounted for approximately 79% of the 1975 total student enrollment at CGS institutions.

TABLE 5

Number of Graduate Fellows (Nonservice Required)

	Number	%	1975	1976	% Change
Public	174	76%	18,574	18,519	0.3% decrease
Private	87	76%	14,146	13,932	1.5% decrease
Total	261	76%*	32,720	32,451	0.8% decrease

TABLE 6

Full-time - Part-time** Total Enrollment

			1975				1976			
	Number	%	Full-time Number	%	Part-time Number	%	Full-time Number	%	Part-time Number	%
Public	195	85%	233,231	43%	310,233	57%	230,002	43%	301,890	57%
Private	94	82%	60,702	41%	88,383	59%	59,217	40%	90,642	60%
Total	289	84%***	293,933	42%	398,616	58%	289,219	42%	392,532	58%

*Based on the computations described under Sample Description on page 3, the 261 institutions responding to this question represent 76% of the CGS institutions and accounted for approximately 73% of the 1975 total student enrollment at CGS institutions.

**Institutions were directed to apply their own institutional definitions to "part-time" and "full-time."

***Based on the computations described under Sample Description on page 3, the 289 institutions responding to this question represent 84% of the CGS institutions and accounted for approximately 83% of the 1975 total student enrollment at CGS institutions.

TABLE 7

Number of Master's Degrees

	Number	%	1974-75	1975-76	% Change
Public	208	90%	136,955	144,875	5.8% increase
Private	102	89%	41,665	42,053	0.9% increase
Total	310	90%*	178,620	186,928	4.7% increase

*Based on the computations described under Sample Description on page 3, the 310 institutions responding to this question represent 90% of the CGS institutions and accounted for approximately 90% of the 1975 total student enrollment at CGS institutions.

TABLE 8

Number of Ph.D. Degrees

	Number	%	1974-75	1975-76	% Change
Public	143	82%	20,166	19,936	1.1% decrease
Private	78	81%	8,631	8,780	1.7% increase
Total	221	91%*	28,797	28,716	0.3% decrease

*Based on the computations described under Sample Description on page 3, the 221 institutions responding to this question represent 91% of the CGS institutions and accounted for approximately 84% of the 1975 total student enrollment at CGS institutions.

THE COUNCIL OF
GRADUATE SCHOOLS
IN THE UNITED STATES

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J. BOYD PAGE
President

December 10, 1976

Dear Colleague:

I am happy to send you the results of Part I of the CGS-GRE Board 1976-77 Survey of Graduate Enrollment. You will recall that parts of this were reported at our Annual Meeting.

The response rate, 91 percent, was most gratifying. This unusually complete response is indicative of the importance to the education community of timely data and the willingness of our member deans to cooperate in the work of the Council and the GRE Board. We do thank you most sincerely and trust that the response rate for Part II, which you should receive in early January, will equal our past successes.

Please note the caveats and explanatory statements which should be kept in mind in interpreting these data to the public. We encourage you to make use of these data as appropriate to inform your Boards of Regents, State Coordinating Agencies, faculties, and public.

May I again thank you for your prompt response.

Very sincerely yours,

J. Boyd Page

J. Boyd Page

Enclosure
cc: Janis I. Somerville, GRE Program, ETS
Richard Armitage, Chairman, GRE Board